

*"Working toward
a world free of
tobacco use and
related cancer
and suffering."*

TCRB on the web:

- [research](#)
- [about TCRB](#)
- [funding](#)
- [resources](#)
- [findings](#)

Pilot E-Newsletter

This e-newsletter is a pilot project of the Tobacco Control Research Branch (TCRB). We hope it will to enhance your knowledge of our branch activities. If you read further, you'll find out more about newly published research, branch initiatives, news reports, grant information, and details about upcoming meetings. We appreciate any comments you may have (email brubacha@mail.nih.gov) and encourage you to visit our Web site www.tobaccocontrol.cancer.gov for more information.

NCI's Tobacco Control Research Branch generates new information about the causes of tobacco use, addiction, and tobacco-related cancers (discovery); creates and evaluates tools and interventions to understand and treat tobacco use and addiction (development); and applies, promotes, and disseminates evidence-based interventions in clinical and public health practice, and policy development (delivery).

Change in Leadership

As of December 15, 2003, Dr. Cathy Backinger is serving as Acting Branch Chief of TCRB. Since 1998, Dr. Backinger has been a Program Director in the branch, responsible for the development and implementation of extramural research programs in smokeless tobacco and youth tobacco prevention and cessation. Dr. Scott Leischow is now serving as the Acting Associate Director for Behavioral Research and will remain highly involved in branch activities.

NCI Releases HINTS Dataset

The national Health Information National Trends Survey (HINTS) dataset is now available to the public. HINTS was created to monitor changes in health communications and includes several tobacco-related questions. The Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences at NCI has developed a Web site for HINTS which includes background information, downloadable survey instrument and dataset, and information about research currently underway. Visit <http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/hints/index.html>.



TIRC Opens Its Doors



The Tobacco Intervention Research Clinic (TIRC) officially opened on December 1, 2003. The TIRC was established by the Tobacco Control Research Branch through a partnership with SAIC-Frederick, Inc. to conduct innovative, state-of-the science research on behavioral and pharmacological tobacco use treatment interventions in clinical outpatient populations. The TIRC is home to a team of behavioral scientists and medical and research staff that will collaborate with a variety of public and private organizations. Recruitment has begun for the TIRC's first study entitled "Contingency Management to Enhance Smoking Cessation for Cancer Survivors: A Proof of Concept Trial".

In the News

HHS Announces National Smoking Cessation Quitline Network

On February 3, 2004, HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson announced plans for a national network of smoking cessation quitlines. HHS plans to establish a new toll-free telephone number to serve as a single access point to the national network of quitlines. The three main components of the plan include: 1. States with existing quitlines will receive increased funding from CDC to enhance services; 2. States without quitlines will receive grants from CDC to establish them; and 3. NCI's Cancer Information Service will provide cessation assistance to individuals in states without quitlines. Read the entire HHS news release at <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2004pres/20040203.html>.

Study Shows Strong Tobacco Control Programs and Policies Can Lower Smoking Rates

A study published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* provides the latest evidence that investing in state tobacco control programs can reduce smoking rates. In this evaluation of the American Stop Smoking Intervention Study (ASSIST), the authors found that states that were part of the ASSIST intervention program showed a greater reduction in smoking prevalence (the number of people who smoke) than non-ASSIST states. The study also found that states with stronger tobacco control policies and greater ability to implement tobacco control programs experienced larger reductions in smoking. At the time of the study, ASSIST was the largest federally funded demonstration project to help states develop effective strategies to reduce smoking. In 1991, the National Cancer Institute (NCI), part of the National Institutes of Health, provided funds to 17 state health departments and forged a partnership with the American Cancer Society to undertake the study. The ASSIST evaluation is the most comprehensive evaluation ever conducted on a large, multi-state tobacco control study. Read the entire NCI news release at <http://cancer.gov/newscenter/pressreleases/ASSIST>.

Synthesis Meeting



NCI Tobacco Control Investigators Meeting: Synthesizing Research for the Public's Health

June 2-4, 2004

Omni San Diego Hotel, San Diego, California

This meeting will provide a unique opportunity for scientists from many disciplines to explore our progress in tobacco control research and to plan for future collaboration across disciplines. The meeting will also focus on facilitating collaboration between research scientists and community-based professionals to promote the application of research findings into effective strategies and programs. The Synthesizing Research for the Public's Health meeting will be held from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., June 2-3, immediately following the individual research investigators meetings, and will also take place from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on June 4. The Synthesis brochure and registration form are available at http://dccps.nci.nih.gov/TCRB/investigators_meeting.html.

Smokefree.gov

www.smokefree.gov launched by the NCI to Help Smokers Quit

www.smokefree.gov is a commercial-free site developed using scientific smoking cessation research. It provides a variety of media to help people quit smoking, including online instant messaging, Web-based quitting guide, smoking quitline 1-877-44U-QUIT, and self-help guides.

The Web site offers smoking cessation self-help guides for special populations, including Spanish speakers, African American smokers, smokers over the age of 50, and smokers who have recently quit. Unique features include a nicotine addiction test, a craving journal, and details on medications that can help smokers manage withdrawal symptoms. The site also provides the phone numbers and Web sites for quitlines within each state via an interactive U.S. map.

Researchers and health professionals can use www.smokefree.gov to access the government best practice manuals for treating tobacco use and dependence in addition to reports by the Surgeon General about smoking. Organizations that provide information on smoking cessation are encouraged to link to www.smokefree.gov. Visit the [site](#) or contact Dr. Jacqueline Stoddard at stoddaja@mail.nih.gov for more information.

New Publications

Tobacco and Health Disparities, American Journal of Public Health

The *American Journal of Public Health* released the February 2004 issue on Tobacco and Health Disparities. We are pleased to announce that many of the papers published in this issue were first presented at the *National Conference on Tobacco and Health Disparities* that was held in December 2002 in Tampa, Florida and cosponsored by the National Cancer Institute, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Legacy Foundation, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, the American Cancer Society, the National Latino Council on Alcohol, and Tobacco Prevention, and the National African American Tobacco Prevention Network.

"The health disparities movement offers the tobacco control community an opportunity to participate in this vital national public health agenda by documenting, monitoring, and elucidating reasons for these differences and by restructuring, reworking, and reinvigorating approaches for diverse communities to eliminate disparities," (Dr. Sherry Mills, Guest Editor, 2004). Papers published in the AJPH issues address some of the key critical issues in tobacco and health disparities research. The AJPH issue also includes a paper that summarizes the research recommendations developed during the *National Conference on Tobacco and Health Disparities*. Please visit <http://www.ajph.org/content/vol94/issue2/index.shtml> to view these papers.

Tobacco Control: Advances and challenges in youth tobacco research

This supplemental issue of *Tobacco Control* on youth tobacco research provides articles on the following topics: implementing and evaluating youth tobacco cessation programs, pharmaceutical and behavioral tobacco cessation interventions with adolescents, understanding initiation of tobacco use, research methodology issues, and state of the science and future directions for adolescent and young adult prevention and cessation. [Order online.](#)

First Conference on Menthol Cigarettes: Setting the Research Agenda, Executive Summary

The First Conference on Menthol Cigarettes: Setting the Research Agenda, Executive Summary presents background on the use of menthol in cigarettes, and provides readers with a variety of questions related to menthol that still need to be studied. Topics include the emergence of menthol cigarettes; why it is important to study menthol cigarettes; emerging research on behavior, epidemiology, and toxicology of menthol cigarettes; the African Americanization of menthol cigarette use in the U.S.; the marketing of menthol cigarettes in the United States; physiological, psychological, social, and cultural influences on the use of menthol

cigarettes among African Americans and Hispanics; epidemiology of menthol cigarette use; menthol pharmacology and its potential impact on cigarette smoking behavior; application, use and effects of menthol in cigarettes; and research needs and challenges. [View PDF](#) or [order](#).

Special Issue on Youth Tobacco Cessation, American Journal of Health Behavior

Each day, over 2000 youth under the age of 18 become daily smokers, and the age of smoking initiation is going down, notes Susan J. Curry, PhD. This Special Issue, funded by the National Cancer Institute and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, seeks to synthesize research in youth tobacco cessation in order to fill the gap between scientific knowledge and the practical application of tobacco cessation for adolescents.

A key initiative of the Youth Tobacco Cessation Collaborative's National Blueprint for Action: Youth and Young Adult Tobacco Cessation, the issue compares review methods, reviews the better practices framework, puts forth guidelines for practice, and recommends improvements for the future.

Youth tobacco cessation is a critically important public health research area and there is a great need for additional scientifically rigorous studies in order to gather evidence about the effectiveness of youth specific cessation interventions. Given the demand for effective youth tobacco cessation programs, practitioners need to consider planning for implementation, selecting a cessation intervention, and evaluating both program process and outcomes. [Online viewing and ordering information](#).

Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph 15: Those Who Continue to Smoke, Is Achieving Abstinence Harder and Do We Need to Change Our Interventions?

44 million Americans have quit smoking since 1964. The best available cessation treatments produce a quit rate of 25-30%. NCI's newest Smoking and Tobacco Control monograph addresses the hypothesis that the quit rate has stabilized because there has been a "hardening" against cessation treatments by those who continue to smoke.

The monograph's review of the research paints a different and more complex picture. In fact, there are some signs of softening in the smoking population, not hardening. In California a wide array of clinical treatments and public health cessation strategies have been accompanied by a higher proportion of light smokers and more quit attempts. "Is it our smokers, or our treatments, that have hardened?" questions Dr. C. Tracy Orleans of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. [Online viewing and ordering information](#).



NCI Grant Information

P01 Guidelines with New Summary of Changes

<http://deainfo.nci.nih.gov/awards/P01.htm>

- Beginning with the February 1, 2004 receipt date, all NCI P01 applications will be reviewed by convened review panels meeting in the greater Washington, DC area
- Applications, grouped according to general research theme and approach, will be reviewed in clusters of two to four as appropriate
- New (Type 1), competing renewal (Type 2) and amended applications will be grouped together
- Amended applications will have a reasonable representation from the previous review panel
- Although site visits will be discontinued, applicants will have an opportunity to respond to review panel questions directly by telephone conference or by other means

New Policy on Large R01's

<http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-CA-04-004.html>

- A separate payline will be established at each round for unsolicited R01 grants with direct costs in excess of \$700,000 for any one year
- The \$700,000 limit pertains to any one year and not the entire budget
- Large R01 payline will be determined at each round, taking into consideration scientific scope, scientific merit, and budgetary constraints
- Large R01's submitted in response to RFAs or PARs, which are not reviewed by CSR, are currently not percentiled and are not affected by this policy

Rules for Resubmission of R21's

<http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-04-034.html>

- Submit the application as an amended application and reference the new PA number
- Resubmitted applications will be assigned the old number and be considered an amended application
- The new PA has a higher cap and so budgets can be increased

Other Grant Policy Links:

NCI Grant Policies

<http://deainfo.nci.nih.gov/grantspolicies/index.htm>

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NCI Grant Mechanisms and Descriptions
<http://deainfo.nci.nih.gov/flash/awards.htm>

NCI Extramural Funding Opportunities
<http://deainfo.nci.nih.gov/funding.htm>

NCI Tobacco Links

NCI's Tobacco Control Research Branch
<http://tobaccocontrol.cancer.gov>

NCI's Tobacco and Cancer Page
<http://cancer.gov/cancerinfo/tobacco>

NCI's Director's Update: Tobacco Use: Despite Progress,
Still the Leading Cause of Cancer Death
<http://www.cancer.gov/directorscorner/directorsupdate-11-25-2003>

NCI's Online Smoking Cessation Web site
<http://www.smokefree.gov>